

State in the Union! We are constrained to believe that Philadelphia was trying to pay a compliment to our bereaved city through *American Medicine*, and let the world know that it desired to share its glory with its stricken—but not fallen—sister.

Is it so very hard to tell the truth; to be just plain, ordinary, simple honest? Is it difficult to avoid lies and deceit and trickery, when dealing with physicians? IS IT HARD? Are they of such simple mind that, forsooth, it is impossible to keep from gulling them, the temptation being so great? It would certainly seem so. Some four years ago this JOURNAL began to say things about nostrums advertised to the medical profession, and somewhat later urged upon the American Medical Association the necessity for taking some action against the rapidly increasing pest of these deadly cure-alls or sure specifics. Fortunately for our profession, and the safety of our patients, the Association has taken up the work, as you know, through its Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry. Our Publication Committee, in the early days of its existence, thought it knew something of the rottenness of the nostrum or "proprietary" business; in the light of the facts being accumulated by the Council, your Publication Committee seems to have known comparatively nothing. There seems to be hardly a single manufacturer who has not in the past, or does not now stoop to the level of dishonesty, either active or passive, in his dealings with the medical profession. Some simple mixture will be put out under a new and high sounding name, and for it most exaggerated, to say the least, claims will be made. Fooled by these false claims, or by the technology of chemical ingredients of which the physician is necessarily ignorant—and knowingly the manufacturer plays upon this lack of technical knowledge—the stuff is used by physicians when if they but knew the real truth it would have no consideration. What the Council of Pharmacy and Chemistry, what the American Medical Association, what every thinking physician wants, is merely honesty of the homely or "garden" variety. Just plain ordinary truth about the things which we are asked to use and prescribe, and the properties and virtues of these things. Is that asking too much? Is the Association, or its Council, asking too much of the pharmaceutical manufacturers of this country when it asks for the plain, simple truth? Will it pay any manufacturer, in view of the serious manner in which the Association has taken up the work, and will continue it, longer to follow the practices of dishonesty, concealment, fraud and misstatement? Gentlemen, it is all up to you. Will you follow the work of the Council—a work intended solely for your own betterment and your own help—and will you see to it that such frauds as are disclosed by the Council never more receive recognition from you?

Remember our new address, 2210 Jackson Street, San Francisco.

For instance, it is quite probable that you will not find in the approved list of "new and non-official remedies," that delicious-

A SINGLE ly fraudulent and wonderful ILLUSTRATION. preparation, "satyria." Why?

Well, if the manufacturer ever sends you one of the old pamphlets advertising this stuff, you will find therein something like this:

"Impotency due to any cause whatever, be it orchitis, epididymitis, former gonorrhea, the result of onanism or masturbation, senility or overindulgence, is eliminated by satyria. It is of equal value in gynecologic practice. When the ovaries undergo atrophy and ovulation ceases to be accomplished, with the usual accompaniment of sterility, satyria brings about a restoration of the lost function. In addition to this it prevents further uterine atrophy and in a comparatively short time the uterus regains its former size and physical as well as physiological capacity."

This is almost as interesting and quite as true as the fairy stories about spontaneous generation of life. The next step would naturally be the claim that a little satyria, energetically rubbed into the skin of a dead person would not only restore him to life, but would make a young live man out of an old dead one. We do not believe that there is a physician in the State of California so densely ignorant as to believe this sort of rot, but that there must be some medical men in the country who do believe it, is evidenced by the fact that the "manufacturers" continue to make the stuff and to advertise it.

It is with no small degree of pleasure that we note that the *Texas State Journal of Medicine*, the official journal of the Texas State Medical Society, has taken up a very energetic campaign against the cut-rate fee for life insurance examinations. The claim is being made by the companies that, because of the recent insurance exposures, and consequent legislation, cutting down the amount which may be expended to secure new business—what is called the "expense loading"—they cannot afford to pay more than \$3.00 for a medical examination for a policy of \$1,000.00. Let it be granted that, for the sake of argument, this is true. Then it would naturally follow that the company could afford a fee of \$6.00 for a \$2,000.00 policy; a fee of \$9.00 for a \$3,000.00 policy; a fee of \$12.00 for a \$4,000 policy, etc. This is figuring on the basis which the companies themselves have advanced—an expense loading for medical examination of \$3.00 per thousand. But has any one heard the slightest hint of a whisper from the companies that they would pay such fees—fees which the expense loading permits and which even the new and much required legislation does not interfere with? If any such there be, we should much like to have his name and address. Not at all. You are just a poor doctor, glad to get

even the pittance which the official with the princely salary will deign to allow you. If you show a little independence, why the company can get some one else to do the work, and gladly. In this game of death insurance everything seems to have been forgotten except how to get the most money to gamble with and to pay enormous salaries to exalted officials. We published a letter from the medical director of one of the companies, some months ago, in which he said: "If the doctors will not make examination for this (\$3.00) fee, we will get some one else who will." Certainly. Nice safe company for one to insure in. All that's wanted is new business, whether good healthy risks or not. Who cares, so long as that \$2.00 is saved from the examiner's fee and given to the president to juggle with. It would seem that a little more honesty injected into the management of life insurance companies might not do any harm.

From time to time inquiry is made at the office of the Society either for available locations or for men to take such openings. It is a pleasure to be of assistance in these matters and we trust that no one will ever think it a trouble or a bother to the Secretary to give his aid whenever possible. Just at the present time there are two or three openings which the right man might secure and develop into good locations. If you happen to want a place to settle in, or if you wish to change your location, or if you desire to secure some one to take your place, either temporarily or permanently, just let us know. Make the office of the society a sort of clearing house for medical information of all sorts, and let this be one of the "sorts." One place which we have in mind would seem to be an excellent location for a well qualified man who desires to devote himself largely to surgery. Another offers a good opening to a man who would like to do a general country practice, with a fair share of surgery, and who has a small amount of capital—a very few hundred dollars—to invest in the present equipment. If the Secretary can serve you in any of these ways, do not hesitate to call upon him for his assistance.

No one who practices medicine, and especially no one who does much fracture work, but dreads, sooner or later, the affliction of the blackmailing malpractice suit. McCormack has said that nine times out of ten some jealous or disgruntled fellow practitioner may be found behind such suits, backing up the plaintiff, if not indeed inspiring him to sue. This is probably true, and the remedy he suggests is ideal; closer and more friendly relations between the members of our profession and more perfect and harmonious organization. Indeed this remedy of organization is no mere theory, for in Pennsylvania and New York, malpractice suits have come to be almost unknown, simply because they are investi-

gated and defended by the medical organizations in those states. These facts being in mind, a little book entitled "How to Suppress a Malpractice Suit," by Thomas Hall Shastid, M. D., which reached us a short time ago, produces a distinct shock. The author seems to think that practically every malpractice suit is backed by some jealous physician, and the method for suppression which he suggests is truly kind, upright, fair, charitable and honest. It is merely this: Find out who the physician behind the plaintiff is, then find out something derogatory to him, and blackmail him into withdrawing his support. If he is, or if you can make him appear to be the unfortunate victim of some habit, let him know that you will disclose your knowledge unless he withdraws from the support of the plaintiff. Or find some disgruntled patient of the physician, and induce him, in turn, to bring a suit against the other physician. If you cannot locate any physician back of the plaintiff, try and find out whether the patient suing has syphilis; if so, and you let the jury know it at the right time, your case is won, because of the general disgust for those afflicted with this loathsome disease! Nice Christian doctrine? Not one word of more friendly relations between physicians; not a hint of the value of close organization and of concerted and friendly action; not one suggestion that is not for trickery and for stirring up more strife, bitterness and ill feeling in a profession where such sensations are only too common at best! As a contrast to this disgusting preachment, turn to Howard Kelly's life of Walter Reed. It is an inspiration. Seldom has a book come into our hands which was read with greater interest, or the reading of which left a better "taste in the mouth." It may seem, as one passes through the years of hard and unappreciated work, that such work merely for one's own mental betterment, is hardly worth while. Yet the day will come for each one of us in his own way, when the result of that work will appear in the readiness to grasp the opportunity and to do the thing that would be beyond our doing, but for the years of hard grind. It is difficult to avoid an expression of personal obligation to Dr. Kelly for presenting to our profession in such a grateful fashion the life of Walter Reed. By all means read it; you will feel the better for having done so, and you will work the better.

From all accounts, the unchecked riot of crime, of "hold up" and robbery, of looting and murdering in San Francisco gets worse rather than better as the weeks go by. It has come to pass that to be on the streets after dark is to court robbery or worse, and to visit certain sections of the city at night is almost to insure this welcome. To physicians, especially, such a condition of things is a constant menace, for the physician may be called at any time to any part of the city. Already at least one of our San Francisco brothers has been "held up," and another barely missed that distressing experi-

BAD BOOKS AND GOOD.

SAN FRANCISCO PHYSICIANS.